

REMARKS**I. Introduction**

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the indication of allowance of claims 4, 6, 8 and 11. In response to the pending Office Action, Applicants have canceled claims 1, 3 and 5, without prejudice or disclaimer. In view of the foregoing cancellation of claim 3, the objection to claim 3 is moot. Applicants have amended claims 4, 6, 8 and 11, which contain the allowable claimed subject matter indicated by the Examiner, into independent format. Applicants have also amended the specification so as to address the informality cited by the Examiner. No new matter has been added. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 4, 6, 8 and 11 are in condition for allowance.

Should there remain any outstanding issues that require adverse action, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone the undersigned attorney below so that such issues may be resolved as expeditiously as possible.

II. The Rejection of The Claims Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-3, 5, 7, 9-10 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable by USP No. 5,545,291 to Smith.

In response to the current rejection, claims 1, 3, and 5 have been canceled and therefore the rejections to the foregoing claims are moot. As the claim elements recited in claims 4, 6, 8 and 11 have been indicated to be allowable by the Examiner if rewritten into independent format, Applicants respectfully submit that the foregoing amendments to the claims overcome the pending rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103 and are now in condition for allowance.

III. All Dependent Claims Are Allowable Because The Independent Claims From Which They Depend Are Allowable

Under Federal Circuit guidelines, a dependent claim is nonobvious if the independent claim upon which it depends is allowable because all the limitations of the independent claim are contained in the dependent claims, *Hartness International Inc. v. Simplimatic Engineering Co.*, 819 F.2d at 1100, 1108 (Fed. Cir. 1987). Accordingly, as amended claims 4, 6, 8 and 11 are patentable for the reasons set forth above, it is respectfully submitted that claims 2, 7, 9, 10 and 12 dependent thereon are also in condition for allowance.

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IV. Request For Notice Of Allowance

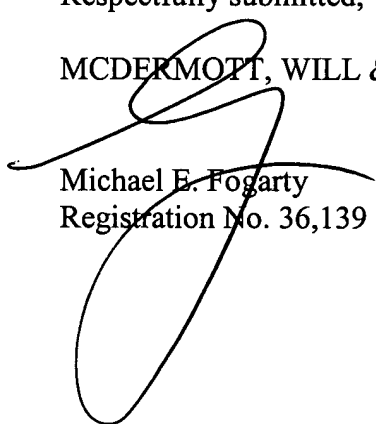
Having fully responded to all matters raised in the Office Action, Applicants submit that all claims are in condition for allowance, an indication for which is respectfully solicited.

If there are any outstanding issues that might be resolved by an interview or an Examiner's amendment, the Examiner is requested to call Applicants' attorney at the telephone number shown below.

To the extent necessary, an additional petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 500417 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

MCDERMOTT, WILL & EMERY



Michael E. Fogarty
Registration No. 36,139

600 13th Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20005-3096
(202) 756-8000 MEF:AHC:jj
Facsimile: (202) 756-8087
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